

1407.0.55.001 - ABS.Stat - Beta: Web Browser User Guide, 2013

Latest ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 01/03/2013 First Issue



Introduction

Includes: Information about ABS.Stat Beta and its various features as well as descriptions of concepts, dimensions and what search functions are available.



The ABS.Stat Web Browser

Includes: The functionality of the web browser interface: Table View (including pivot table features), Merged Queries, Metadata and Full Text Search.



Customise Selection

Includes: How to define your data selection by dimensions, dimension members and lay out options.



Customise Table Option

Includes: Customising your table by using code options (e.g.: geography), setting decimals, removing empty rows and other functions.



Exporting Data

Includes: How to export data from ABS.Stat in various formats - Excel, Text File or SDMX (XML).



Viewing Metadata

Includes: Viewing metadata at different levels and where to access metadata within ABS.Stat.



Working with Queries

Includes: How to combine one or more queries.



Printing Data from the Browser

Includes: Options for printing queries.



Providing Feedback

Includes: How to contact us and tell us what you think about ABS.Stat.

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Introduction

About ABS.Stat

ABS.Stat is an interactive, free online tool that presents datasets in a searchable, flexible and dynamic way. ABS.Stat presents users with two options, a web browser to view, query and download data and a web service to facilitate machine to machine communication via the use of the Statistical Data and Metadata Standard (SDMX). The web service enables other organisations to interface with ABS.Stat and customise the data in their own environments.

The ABS.Stat web interface allows you to:

- · search and discover ABS statistics
- query, view and download data choose pre-packaged data or customise data to your own requirements
- · view valuable metadata alongside the data
- export data in a range of formats such as Excel and CSV as well as SDMX.

Access to ABS. Stat is open and free of charge.

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ABS.Stat Concepts

ABS.Stat features the following main concepts:

- Catalogues of information on themes, datasets, dimensions and dimension members
- Storage of **metadata** at all levels from dataset through to cell level
- Storage of numeric data figures as well as cell level flags
- A data warehouse searching mechanism

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Data Organisation

Datasets

Within ABS.Stat, statistical data are organised in the form of datasets. A dataset is a collection of numerical values and their associated textual information, with all values sharing a common set of dimensions. Each dataset is attached to a specific statistical activity or sub-activity.

Dimensions

The dimensions of a dataset are the axes on which the data are described. Dimensions can be presented as either a flat list or as a hierarchy. **Time** is a common example of a dimension.

Dimension members

Every dimension contains a pre-defined list of items, called dimension members. In the **Time** dimension for example, the dimension members are the different time periods.

Metadata

Qualitative data, attached to the quantitative data in ABS.Stat is called reference metadata. Reference metadata can be found at various levels, ranging from an abstract found at the level of an entire dataset, or series-level footnotes which apply to a broad selection of data within a dataset, and down to the level of a single cell.

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Search

A text-based search facility, which searches through dataset names, dimension names, dimension member names and metadata, can be used to quickly locate relevant datasets and view tables.

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The ABS.Stat Web Browser

The online window to the ABS.Stat data warehouse is provided by the ABS.Stat Web Browser. This browser has been designed to allow both experienced and new users to rapidly locate and retrieve statistical data and related metadata.

Main features include:

- Table View
 – construct queries, view data, flags and metadata from a table that includes a number of pivot features for customising the data layout.
- Merged Queries combine queries to allow cross-dataset comparisons along common dimensions.
- Metadata Access access all metadata from dataset level down to observation or data point / series footnotes and data flags.
- Full Text Search rapidly locate series across datasets, data dimensions and metadata.
- Dynamic graphics visualise data dynamically in a line chart, bar chart or pie chart.

Features in the future will include:

- Links to the latest versions of the most Frequently Requested ABS Data (CPI, GDP figures, etc.)
- Data Basket save data queries for later viewing, and share them with others.
- Microdata Viewer access transaction-level microdata as well as aggregate macrodata.

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Locating Data

The welcome page presents some of the high-level information that can be accessed in ABS.Stat. From the welcome page, the user has the option of finding ABS statistical data and metadata through several different avenues, and customising how that data will be formatted.

Data can be located through the following search options:

· ABS.Stat Search Search	20
· Data by theme Find in Themes	» Reset

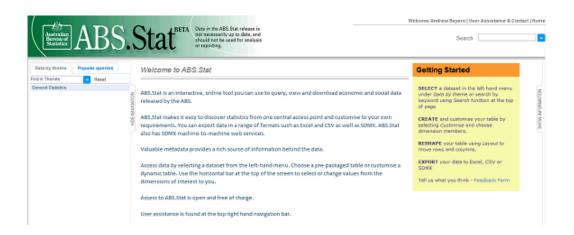


Figure 1: ABS.Stat web browser search function

Click on the ABS logo to return to the Welcome Page

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ABS.Stat Search

Data can be located by entering keywords into the ABS.Stat search box at the top right of the page. This will return a list of links giving the name of each dataset in which the keywords were found, and providing further details as to where the keywords are located within each dataset. The most relevant links are shown first, based on the frequency with which the keywords appear in each dataset - and at which level they were found. A keyword found in the name of a dataset is considered more relevant than a keyword found only in one of the dimension members within this dataset or in the metadata.

Clicking on the link will open the dataset with the default view.



Figure 2: Results from the search ranked in order of relevance

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Browse Themes

In the **Data by Theme** panel, click **General Statistics**. A list of themes will appear below. Select a theme to access data, click once on the name of a dataset.

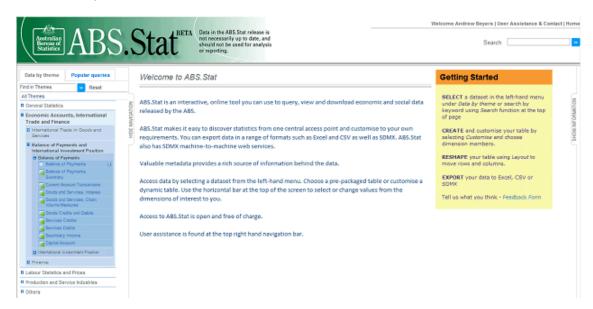


Figure 3: Browsing through themes to view data

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Using the Table Features

When selecting a dataset, the dataset name and a list of dimensions for the dataset are displayed. If there is any reference metadata available at the dataset level, it will also be displayed. If it doesn't display, you may have to click on the right side of the screen on the SHOW INFORMATION/HIDE INFORMATION tab.



Figure 5: Table features

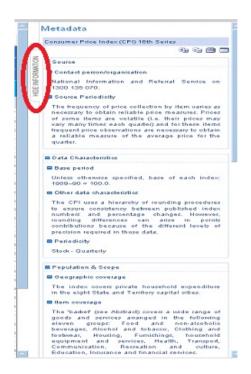


Figure 6: Reference Metadata

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Locating a dataset or query in the theme list

At the top of the **Browse Themes** panel click the text box and enter a key term to search for within the theme and dataset list. Click the '>>' sign or press **Enter** to execute the search. To start over, simply click **Reset** to the right of the text box and click the text box again in order to enter a new key term. This search routine will look for exact matches of the entered text string, including spaces but ignoring minuscule or majuscule characters. This method also allows a quick look-up for well-known ABS datasets by their acronym, e.g. CPI.



Figure 4: Find a theme or dataset

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Customise Selection

Once you have made your data selection, you can select from the icon action bar.



Figure 6: Icon action bar

Select the:

- <u>Customise</u> button to customise the dimensions, dimension members and layout of the current table.
- Export button to save your selection as an Excel, Text file (CSV), PC-axis, or SDMX file.
- description with the state of the state of

The **Customise - Selection** information shows the dimensions of the dataset with an indication, in brackets, of the number of items, or members, selected in each dimension. If you click a dimension title, a list of the members you can choose from will be shown. You will need to select at least one item from each component of the data selection (i.e. measure, region, index structure and time). In each menu once you have ticked the items you want you also need to press select.

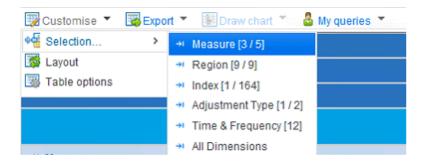


Figure 7: Customise section drop down

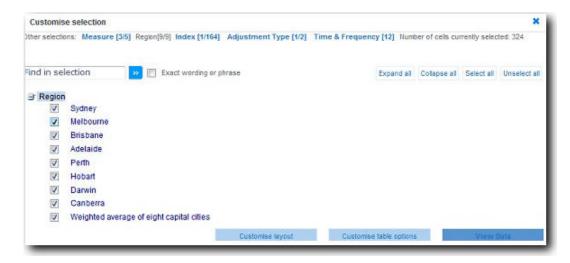


Figure 8: List of dimension members

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Opening more than one dataset at a time

With this release, there is no functionality to open more than one dataset at a time within a single tab of your internet browser. Future releases may contain this feature. You can however open multiple tabs of your internet browser and then open a different dataset in each.

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Working with Dimensions

What are Dimensions?

Dimensions describe an observation in a 'fact table'. Each dataset has a unique set of dimensions that help to define that data. Datasets may share some common dimensions which are standard across datasets. Each dimension contains a series of dimension members.

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Selecting Dimensions and their Variables

The items selected for each dimension, often referred to as dimension members, can be

modified by clicking on and either an individual dimension, or the all dimensions option. A pop up window will open from which dimension members can be selected.

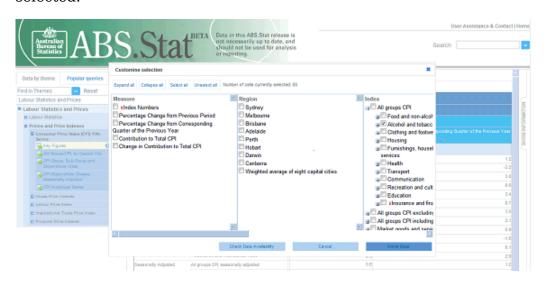


Figure 9: Using the Dimension Selector

To select or deselect an item, click the check box to the left of the item. In hierarchical dimensions, a plus (+) or minus (-) will appear next to parent-level items. Clicking on these symbols will allow you to show or hide the child items.

At the top and bottom of the screen there are a series of options.

To apply your modified selection of items for the current dimension and see a table of data corresponding to this new selection, click **View Data**.

For hierarchical dimensions, clicking on **Expand all** or **Collapse all** will show or hide all the child-level items of the dimension respectively. If all members of a hierarchical dimension are selected, the resulting table could contain empty rows or columns corresponding to the higher levels. If a dimension value is selected first and then another dimension value is to be selected, **Select all** will select all available values for the initial selection.

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Dimension Member Colour Coding

ABS.Stat uses colour coding to help you identify the dimension members that have existing data. This is especially important for sparse datasets where data can be found in only a small proportion of dimension combinations. This function has been provided to save time by avoiding searching for non-existent data. When the user selects a dimension and some values for that dimension and when the next dimension is selected, there is a dynamic filtering of the values and the colour coding is displayed based on the colour scheme described below. The colour coding takes into account the current selection for all other members. In other words, the colours indicate the existence of data for the years, etc. currently selected.

Based on the current selection for all other dimensions, the colours for each dimension member indicate the following:

Dark Blue: The item has data.

Blue: The item has no data but some of its children have data.

Green/Grey Italic: Item has no data at any level.



Figure 10 : Dimension Member Colour Coding - Green/Grey Italic: Item has no data at any level

Another option is to search within a dimension for a particular dimension member matching the search criteria. All matching dimension members will be displayed. The 'Select all' or 'Unselect all' options are then displayed.

Search is not available if you select 'All dimensions'.

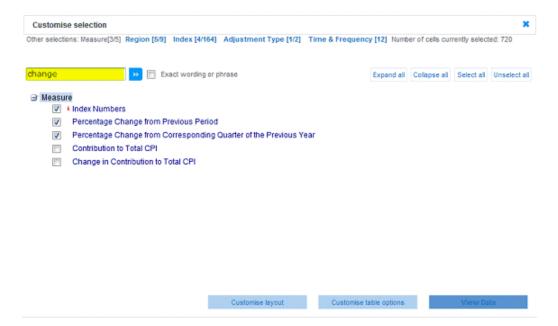


Figure 11: Searching in the Dimension Selector

All matching dimension members will be displayed and automatically selected.

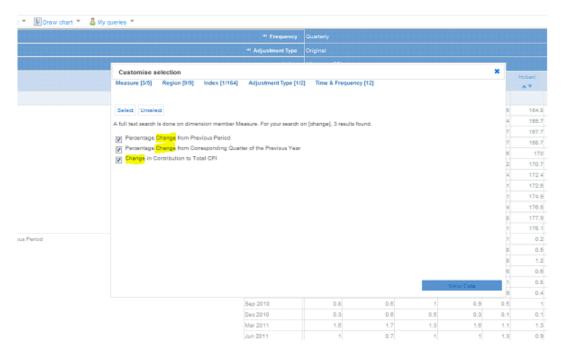


Figure 12: Results of a Search in Dimensions Selector

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Changing the Time Dimension

The options available for changing the selected dates of a time dimension are different from those presented for other dimensions. Dates can be selected either using the **Date Range Selection** method or the **Time Period Selection** method.

Date Range

All frequencies available for the selected dataset are shown on the screen (below). If the data is only annual, for example, the controls for selecting quarters and months will not appear.

Step 1. Tick the boxes next to the frequencies to be included in the selection. For example: Quarterly or Annually.

Step 2. Choose either a specific range of dates (from 1980 to 2000, for example) by clicking **Select Date Range**, or indicate that you wish to have the most recent data available (last 5 years, for example) by clicking **Select Latest Data**.

When selecting a date range, it is possible to select a start year, quarter, month, etc. and automatically include all available data from that date onward by ticking the box next to **Latest Available Data**.

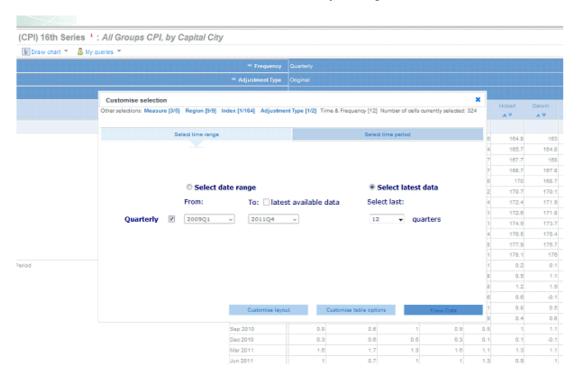


Figure 13: Data Range Selection

Select Time Period

It is also possible to select individual years, quarters, months, etc. by ticking the box next to each item. This is necessary if the selection of dates you wish to include is not a continuous series, but instead contains breaks or time periods outside the main date range. This works in a manner identical to the general dimension selected.

- Step 1. Select the required dataset in the **Browse Themes** panel.
- Step 2. Select the Time (& Frequency) dimension.
- Step 3. Use **Date Range Selection** tab to select the date range required.
- Step 4. Use the **Time Period Selection** tab to select the specific periods required.
- Step 5. Choose View Data.



Figure 14: Time Period Selection

Note: It is advisable to select a general range of dates using the Select Date range first, and then include or exclude individual time periods using the Select Time Period screen. The inverse, making changes to a **Time Period Selection** using the **Date Range Selection** screen, may result in some of the individual time periods selected being lost, as the **Date Range Selection** screen is only able to manage continuous, non-broken series of dates.

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Rotating Dimensions to Adjust Dataset View

Click 'Layout' found under 'Customise' drop down to position dimensions on the 'Row' or 'Column' axis, or leave them under the 'Page' area at the top of the table.

This can be done by dragging dimensions to the 'Row' or 'Column' axis or 'Page' area.

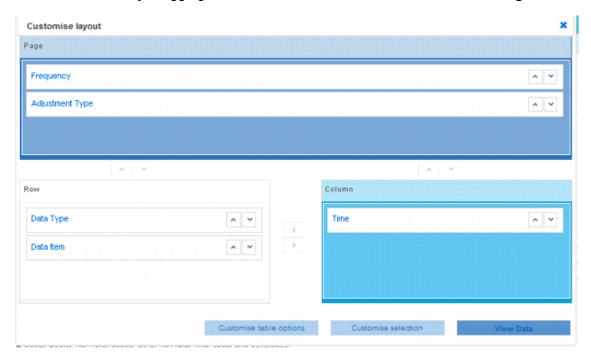


Figure 15: Moving a dimension to rotate the data view

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Selecting Dimensions by Page Filter Option

If a dimension for which more than one item has been selected is placed into the 'Page' area at the top of the page, a drop-down list will become available. To change the filter currently applied to the data, simply select the appropriate value in the drop-down list. If the dimension in question does not have a drop-down list, then only one item has been selected. To include other items, click on the dimension name in the **Customised Selection** box on the left, and follow the instructions provided above to select more items.

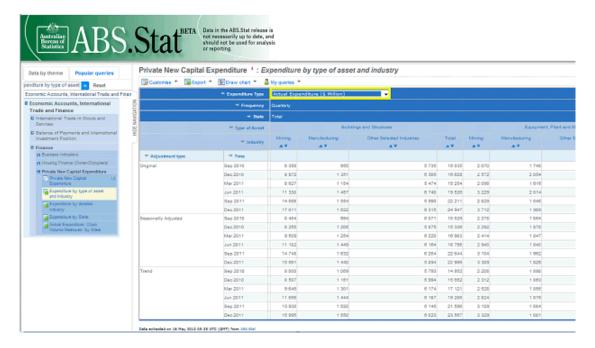


Figure 16: Changing the view using the data items drop-down list

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Sorting Rows of the Data Table

The column headings of a table of data contain small, blue arrows, which allow you to sort the rows of the table according to the value of the cells. The rows can be sorted in either ascending or descending order, and will be sorted according to the values in the column in which you click. Once the arrow is selected it will turn yellow, you can unsort by clicking the yellow arrow.

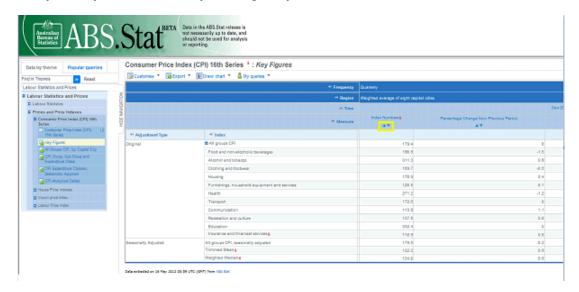


Figure 17: Data table sorted in descending order for the first column

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Customise Table Option

Showing Codes Instead of Names

All datasets, dimensions and dimension members in the data warehouse have short codes as well as names.

The codes can be displayed instead of names, by using the option **Use Codes** instead of full descriptions. Many other options are available such as setting decimals, removing empty rows, fitting pages, charting and others.

To use codes instead of names, select the licon found in the **Customise** drop down. Under the **Use codes** option, select the dimensions you want displayed with codes by clicking on the boxes, and then deselect **Use full descriptions**.

When finished making your selection, click view data.

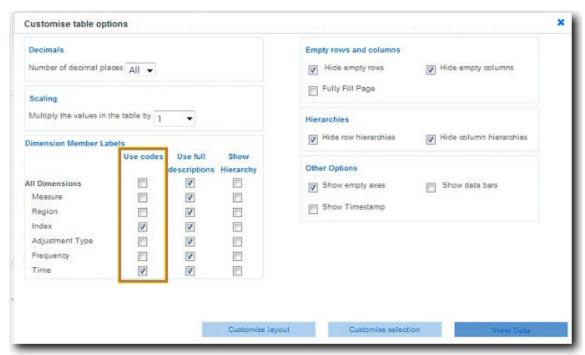


Figure 18: Display options

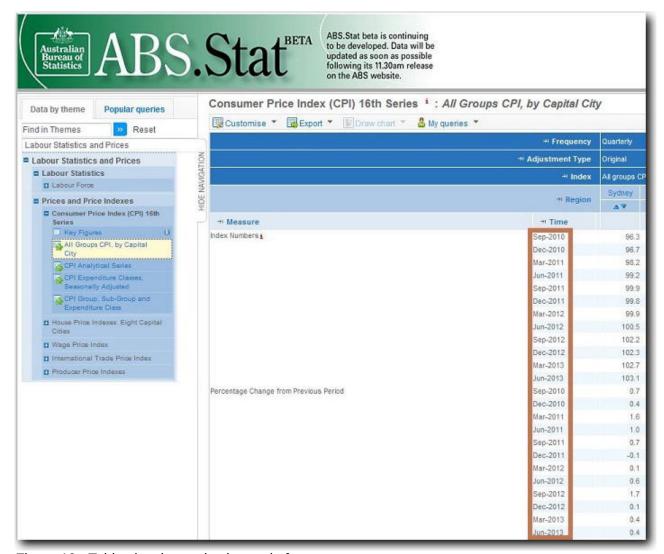


Figure 19: Table showing codes instead of names

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Selecting Groups:

You are able to select entire groups by first selecting the appropriate level and then choose either the select all or unselect all options.

Example: In the 'Index' dimension 'for CPI' you will notice there are (+) symbols indicating a hierarchy. To view all dimension members, click on **'Expand all**.'

To select all of the Bread and cereal products only, click on 'bread and cereal products' and then 'Select all.' 'Select all' will select everything under the highlighted dimension.

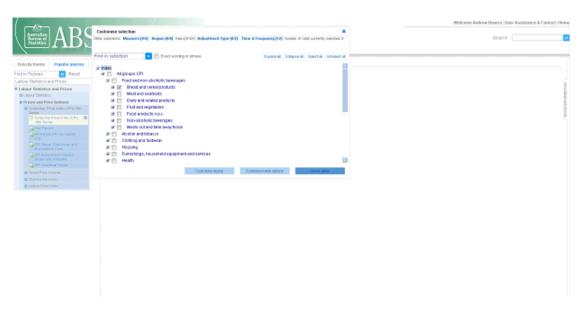


Figure 20: Selecting groups

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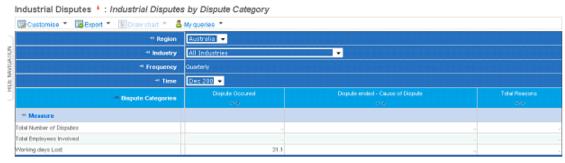


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Hiding Empty Rows or Columns

If a table of data has many rows or columns containing no data, it can be useful to hide these rows or columns, in order to condense the table and improve readability.



Data extracted on 23 May 2012 06:01 UTC (GMT) from ABS.Stat

Figure 21: Before using the Hide Rows & Columns with no data options



Figure 22: Dataset view with empty rows and columns hidden

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Additional Options

Additional options allow the user to format the figures in the data table. You can select the number of digits after the decimal point to be displayed, or select a 'scale' value, which allows you to display the figures in unit value, hundreds, thousands, hundredths, thousandths, etc.

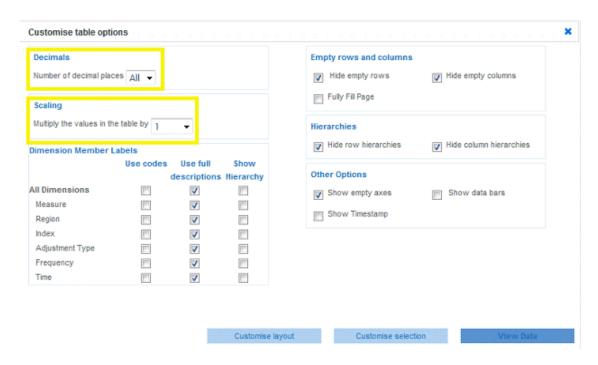


Figure 23: Formatting Options Panel

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Exporting Data

Once you have located data, you can export it in the following formats:

- Excel
- Text File (CSV)
- PC -axis (Ready Made Files not yet available)
- SDMX (XML)

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Exporting to Excel

Click on the **'Export'**, then **Excel** buttons to export your data selection to a MS Excel file. You will be prompted to either save the MS Excel file to disk or open it directly. As your computer settings may not allow for the file to be directly opened, it is recommended that you save the file to your desktop and then open it from there.

Export T Draw charl



Figure 24 : Using the export to Excel option to save data in Excel format

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Exporting to a CSV file

Export T Draw chart

Excel

Larger tables can be saved to a CSV file. To do this, click on the Export button and select

You can then select a dimension label format and a column separator. The dimension label format determines what information will be included in your file for each variable, etc. The column separator determines which character will be used to separate columns in the file. Enter your e-mail address in the box in the middle of the dialog box and click the **Export to Text file** button. The file will be created and an e-mail sent to you informing you how to retrieve it. The file will not be included as an attachment to the e-mail, as it could potentially be very large. Instead the e-mail will contain a link allowing you to download the file.

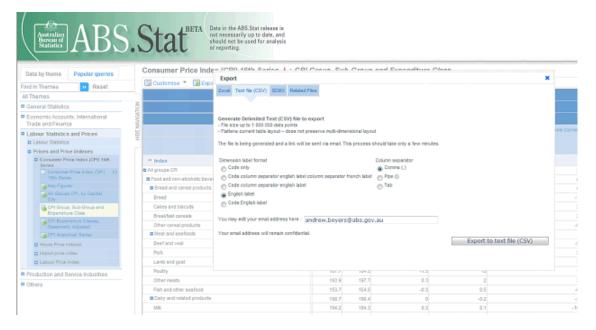


Figure 25: Export option to save data as a CSV file

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Exporting to SDMX

To export to an SDMX format file, select SDMX button from the Exports screen.

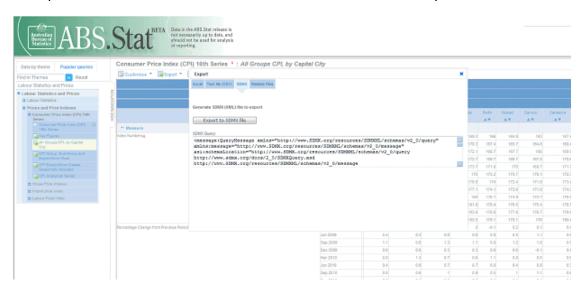


Figure 26: Export in SDMX format

Why can't I download a dataset in SDMX format via the Export SDMX button?



Figure 27: SDMX export error message

There is a 10 minute session time limit per SDMX download request and hence if a request takes more than 10 minutes to download, it will result in a "Unknown error" message being displayed. Users should reduce the number of dataset variables requested i.e. rather requesting data from year 1900 to year 2012, request data from year 2000 to year 2012. Should users require large amounts of data, try making multiple small SDMX requests to retrieve the data needed.

Downloading related files and large data selections

This option is not yet available.

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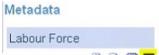
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Viewing Metadata

Metadata can be viewed at all levels, from the dataset-level abstract down through to cell level footnotes. The presence of metadata is flagged by a small red i. Clicking on the red i will bring up the related metadata window in the right-hand area of the screen.



After clicking the sign icon, the window can be moved around and closed by clicking on the "x" in the top right corner of the window.

You can hide metadata from the main screen by clicking 'HIDE INFORMATION'.

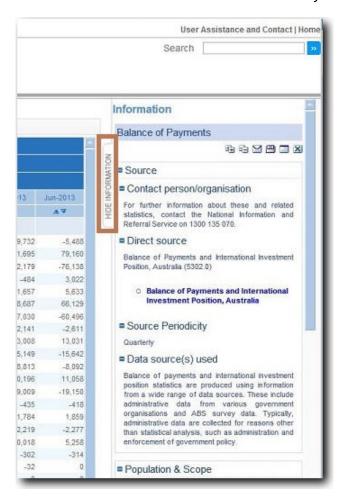


Figure 28: Footnotes and Dataset level metadata

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Other Related Metadata

If there are other metadata available in the datasets, which are closely related to the metadata displayed on screen, a set of links to these other metadata will appear in the metadata window, below the metadata text.

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Flags

Certain pieces of metadata, which are recurrent within the dataset, are treated differently by the system and referred to as flags. These flags appear as letters in parentheses in the cell alongside the piece of data to which they correspond. Below any table containing flags a legend will appear, explaining the meaning of each letter used as a flag in the table.



Figure 29: Viewing the Data Flag Legend

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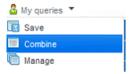
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Working with Queries

Creating a merged query

To create a merged query, first select the datasets required and then view the merged table. Select a dataset and then click on the **Combine** query function found under the 'My Queries' dropdown.



This dataset will then register at the top left hand side of the screen under 'Combine Queries'.



Select another dataset and again click on the **Combine** query function found under the 'My Queries' dropdown. This dataset will also register under the 'Combine Queries' section. You will find options to Edit, Remove or View.



Repeat this for each dataset that you want to include in the multi-dataset query.

When all selections of data have been added, click View to see the combined data table.

Any common dimensions between the different datasets will be automatically combined.

Other dimensions will automatically be displayed along the vertical axis, underneath section headings indicating their original dataset.

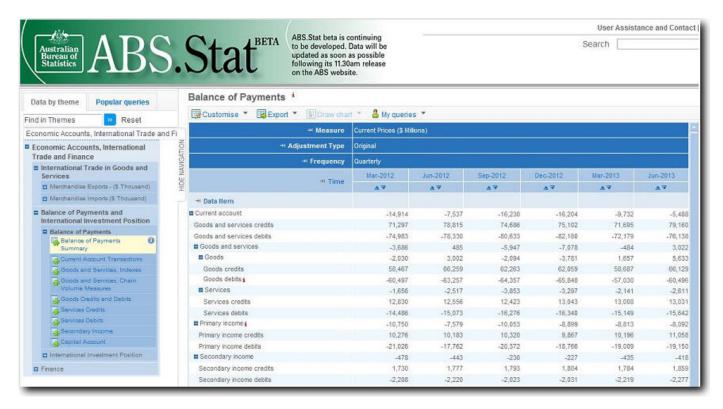


Figure 30 : Adding a selection of data to a Multi-Dataset Query

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Changing the Query

Modify a selection

To modify any of the selections of data in the view, click the name of the dataset in the **Combine Queries** panel, and then click **Edit**. The selection will appear on screen in the same format as a single-dataset query. Make your changes and click once again on the **Combine Query** button. Click **View** in the **Combine Queries** panel to see the modified query.

Remove a selection

To remove one of the selections in a **Combine Queries**, click the name of the dataset in the **Combine Queries** panel, and then click **Remove**. Click **View** in the **Combine Queries** panel to see the modified query.

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Printing Data from the Browser

To print data from the browser, after executing the query, right click and select the print option, or export to Excel (recommended) and print from there. This will print the table displayed.

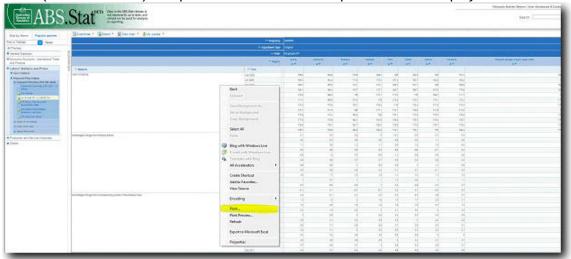


Figure 31: Printing data and other information from the Web Browser

To print **metadata** from ABS.Stat, after clicking either the red or blue **i** you require, click on the print button in the metadata screen and it will print the metadata.

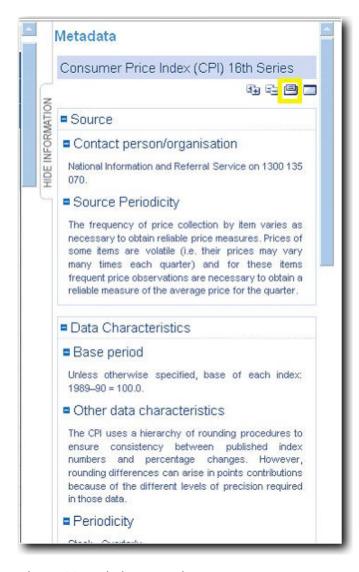


Figure 32: Printing Metadata

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Providing Feedback

You can contact us by selecting the **User Assistance & Contact** tab, found at the top right hand side of the screen. Then select 'Ask a question or give feedback'.

Please note that in order to address your concerns in a timely manner, we have set up three separate request options.

- A content question will provide responses regarding the actual data content of ABS.Stat (e.g., Do you have data on shoe manufacturing?).
- Technical problem should be used for any technical questions or bugs that you encounter.
- Feedback can be used for sending comments, suggestions and observations about the system.

You can also email us directly at abs.stat@gov.au

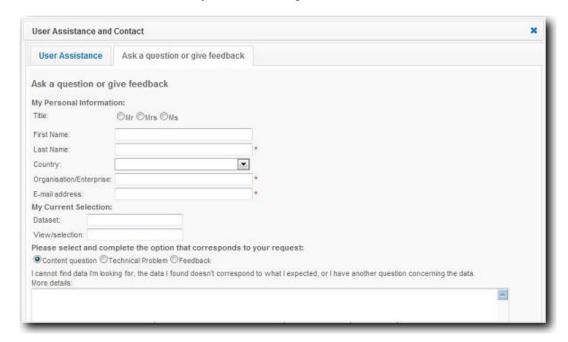


Figure 33 : Sending an email to the ABS.Stat Project Team

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ABS.Stat Beta is a free interactive online tool that presents ABS data in a searchable, flexible and dynamic way. The web browser interface allows you to view, query customise and download data to your own requirements.

This user guide will help you understand how to use the ABS.Stat Beta web browser, including how to find a dataset, view associated metadata, search for and select variables, customise tables, and export data.

The user guide will be updated from time to time as ABS adds further functionality to the system.

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EXPLANATORY NOTES

The ABS.Stat web browser provides an interface where you can view, query, customise and download data.

The ABS.Stat web browser interface allows you to:

- search and discover ABS statistics
- query, view and download data choose pre-packaged data or customise data to your own requirements
- view valuable metadata alongside the data
- export data in a range of formats such as Excel and CSV as well as SDMX.

For more information see About ABS.Stat Beta

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